

**OFFICE ASSISTANT, THE—In Medical Practice—Second Edition**—Portia M. Frederick, Instructor, Medical Office Assisting, Long Beach City College; and Carol Towner, Director of Special Services, Communications Division, American Medical Association. W. B. Saunders Company, West Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pa., 1960. 407 pages, \$5.25.

Since the present trend in the majority of doctors' offices is to employ women who are not trained nurses and secretaries who frequently are not familiar with medical terminology and practices, this book is invaluable as an office manual.

It is a comprehensive coverage of the manifold duties in any doctor's office which will be most valuable in relieving him so he may devote more time to his professional duties. It combines in a logical manner the medical-secretarial requisites for the one-girl office and coordinates the work for an office which hires more than one girl. It treats practically all of the problems encountered in a doctor's office without becoming technical and regardless of field of specialization.

Especially to be recommended is the chapter dealing with medical ethics and etiquette. This is one of the most important phases of a doctor's practice, one of which the patients are the most critical, and one which may harm the patient-doctor relationship the most if not learned and practiced.

As a reference or as a refresher, this book has a place in every doctor's office.

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**PHARMACOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS—A Textbook for Students and Practitioners of Medicine and Its Allied Professions—Fourth Edition, Revised and Enlarged**—Arthur Grollman, Ph.D., M.D., F.A.C.P., Lecturer in Pharmacology and Toxicology, The Medical Branch, and Professor and Chairman of the Dept. of Experimental Medicine, The Southwestern Medical School, The University of Texas. Lea & Febiger, Washington Square, Philadelphia 6, Pa., 1960. 1079 pages, 217 illustrations with two in color, \$12.50.

The author states that "although only two years have elapsed since the appearance of the last edition, the rapid rate of progress in the fields of Pharmacology and Therapeutics has necessitated a revision of the present book." At first glance one sees a close similarity in the third and fourth editions, but careful page by page analysis discloses many new items in the fourth. Examples are a new paragraph on species as a factor modifying drug action, expansion of the discussions on drug toxicity and factors contributing to the termination of drug action, an additional three paragraphs on biological assay, introducing the reader to the idea of statistical analysis, a page on theories of anesthesia which contributes little since it is too brief to give the novice any idea of the factual backgrounds and offers nothing to the teacher. Among anesthetics, descriptions of halothane (Fluothane), methitural, thialbarbital and hydroxydione sodium succinate (Viadril) have been added. The chapter on alcohol has been rearranged, but few facts are added. There is an added paragraph differentiating between addiction and drug habit. This should have been included in earlier editions since no helpful information has been disclosed in laboratories or clinics in this regard in the last two years.

Dr. Grollman has departed from the arrangement of previous editions in that therapeutic use of the opium-type analgetic drugs is discussed under one heading, thus giving better opportunity for comparing their values for each therapeutic indication. He has done this also for other groups of like-acting drugs. He has added a page explaining the mechanism of action of ganglionic blocking agents, the same for neuromuscular block and other agents. A comparative table of characteristics of digitalis preparations

has been compiled. The section on drugs acting in urinary tract infections follows anti-tuberculosis drugs rather than following local anti-infectives; this change is not justified. The section on dihydrostreptomycin does not take into consideration the more recent attitude toward this drug as more dangerous to the eighth cranial nerve than streptomycin. And so on. Seventy-two or more new drugs were added but many of them are only mentioned and few are discussed critically.

The material is included in the same 44 chapters, with the same titles as in the third edition, and the chapters are grouped in the same nine parts. The same lucid descriptions, scholarly presentations and fine synthesis of basic concepts and clinical applications are to be found in this fourth edition as were characteristic of the earlier editions. It is an ideal text for the medical student and for the physician's reference shelf.

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**SELECTED DISEASES—A Bibliography of Internal Medicine**—Arthur L. Bloomfield, M.D., Professor of Medicine, Emeritus, Stanford University School of Medicine. The University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 57, Illinois, 1960. 312 pages, \$6.00.

Scarcely two years ago Dr. Arthur Bloomfield, emeritus professor of medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine, gave us a brilliant annotated bibliographical study on the communicable diseases. Therein he established a new technique to guide students through the major writings which have brought us to our present position in the understanding of disease. In the present volume Dr. Bloomfield follows essentially the same pattern, selecting twenty-one diseases "of old and honorable lineage" from auricular fibrillation to trichinosis. References of fundamental importance with generous excerpts, translated where not in English, have been gathered and put together so as to provide, with the annotations, an almost continuous narrative in "an attempt to bridge the gap between past and present in medicine."

The attempt has been eminently successful. Nonetheless, there are some notable omissions. In the discussion of Stoke-Adams although W. H. Gaskell's classical paper is given due prominence, no reference is made to his superb survey of the position up to 1900 which appeared in E. A. Schäfer's *Textbook of Physiology* of that date; a survey which brings into proper perspective the contributions of Stannius, Kent, his and many others to heart block and which is far superior to some of the publications cited. Likewise, in the discussion of diabetes mellitus, the reviewer finds no mention whatsoever of the work of Lydia de Witt who, basing her experiments on the observations of Schulze and Ssobolew, approached diabetes in the same manner as Banting and produced a potent and active insulin; nor of E. L. Scott, who, as Banting himself had said, had come closer than anyone to solving the problem. The section on diabetes insipidus also leaves much to be desired, especially on the very difficult problem and involved literature on the control of water balance. Surely the remarkable findings of the Scharrers demand inclusion in any consideration of this subject.

Despite the omissions in which we must bow to the judgment of the author attempting to achieve balance, it can only be said that this is a superb book, original in concept and masterful in execution. It should be at the bedside of every physician, young and old, interested in clinical medicine. The great importance of the work lies in providing perspective since, to use Sir Winston Churchill's dictum made before the Royal College of Physicians in March 1944, "The longer you can look back, the further you can look forward" and there is a master physician to show the way.

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